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ABSTRACT

This paper offers a model for role-based preschool psychological services and addresses training issues within the context of the model. A challenge exists to train for a wide range of roles and to train in the judgmental components necessary for appropriate implementation of these roles. To accomplish these ends, an ecological framework lays the groundwork for implications related to training and practice. School psychologists serving preschool children must play a number of assessment roles, shifting emphasis from child variables based on traditional assessments to environmental variables within the proposed interactive model. Intervention strategies should include responsivity to cues from children, use of language appropriate for the young child, encouragement of active involvement with the environment, and a match between a child's level of functioning and task demands. A need exists for specialists who possess the necessary clinical and liaison skills for effective preschool service delivery. Training in preschool service delivery should address the analysis of roles and the development of judgment relative to young children, their teachers, their families, and the community. (ABL)

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Training School Psychologists in Preschool Service Delivery: An Analysis by Roles

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Abstract

The purposes of this paper are to offer a model for role-based preschool psychological services and to address training issues within the context of the model. A challenge exists to train for a wide range of roles and to train in the judgmental components necessary for appropriate implementation of these roles. To accomplish these ends, an ecological framework lays the ground work for implications related to training and practice. An analysis by roles and specialized skills for school psychologists is presented in the areas of assessment and intervention. Additionally, issues related to graduate curriculum and applied field work are addressed.

Training School Psychologists in Preschool Service Delivery: An Analysis by Roles

There is a substantial nationwide need for school psychologists trained to work with young handicapped and at-risk children. The need results from recent legislation (P.L. 94-142 and P.L. 98-199), an increased demand for early intervention with exceptional preschoolers and infants, promising research in early intervention, and a dearth of both qualified practitioners and specifically-focused training programs (Ulrey, 1981). The training challenges are numerous because of complex developmental issues, research in early cognitive and social development that has not been translated into sound techniques and practices, and a range of service delivery alternatives. These challenges merit immediate attention, since school psychologists are already involved in preschool services, and requests for services are expanding rapidly (DeWeerd, 1981).

In many respects, professional practices at the preschool level are founded on "lore" or opinion, and are not well-researched. Examples of such practice include (a) how the processes and outcomes of consultations are conceived, (b) how assessment batteries are created, (c) ways that professionals select, observe, and organize myriad bits of information, (d) how professionals test and accept/reject hypotheses, and (e) what recommendations or

interventions follow from the assessment practices. Even the most behaviorally focused assessments still require subjective judgments (Kanfer, 1985), and further empirical research is necessary to evaluate the appropriateness of target behaviors (Kratochwill, 1985). Many assessment and intervention techniques are based on established conventions, available techniques, and practices suitable for older children that are not based empirically in applied developmental psychology.

Much research with preschoolers deals with the validation of tests, the outcome of screening procedures, the effectiveness of narrowly-defined treatments, and the prediction of children's future educational status. None of these alone provides an appropriate analogue or research base for guiding and evaluating professional practice. One outcome of this situation is that professional practice is based on idosyncratic or "personal" models rather than strategies having empirical foundations. Contributing to the gaps in research and the difficulty in translating research results into professional practices is the lack of a conceptual framework to guide the activities of school psychologists. Without such guidelines, the preparation of school psychologists in this growing area of specialized service delivery is destined to be haphazard at best, and nonexistent at worst.

The purposes of this paper, therefore, are to present a conceptual framework for school-based delivery of preschool

psychological services and, within that framework, to address training issues and curriculum ideas in the areas of assessment and intervention. It extends previous analyses (Barnett, 1986; Paget, 1985) to an analysis by roles, an important contribution to professional practice at the preschool level. A conceptual model for the analysis of roles and related training experiences is necessary to elucidate how professional functioning vis à vis the child, family, preschool teacher, and community is a focal point of assessment outcomes and decisions. Such an analysis can lay the groundwork for role appropriateness and flexibility, both integral parts of preschool services requiring considerable training and professional judgment.

Rationale for an Alternative Model

To impact the total development of preschool children and to avoid splinter delivery of services, alternatives to traditional service delivery are necessary. Expanded involvement in family and classroom environments and more frequent use of adapted assessment strategies require the use of non-traditional approaches. Because of this need for adapted and expanded strategies, the preschool level is fertile ground for a reconceptualization of service delivery and a recasting of roles played by school psychologists.

The service delivery model advanced in this paper stresses the interrelatedness of the various systems (e.g., Bandura, 1978) impacting a young child's development including family, school, and

community. Thus, the model is ecological in its scope and is similar in that respect to other suggested paradigms (i.e., Adelman, 1982; Lapides, 1977; Thurman & Widerstrom, 1985). The unique contribution of Bandura's (1978) reciprocal determination model to an analysis by roles is its reflection of the complexity of human relationships and the environmental influences on those relationships. That is, a child's or adult's personal characteristics, behavior, and surrounding environment are conceptualized as interrelated factors that must be assessed and treated as an integrated network within each of the various systems. The model incorporates biological and environmental determinants of child and adult behavior and has a strong research base with respect to psychosocial change. Also, the components of the model are consistent with contemporary trends that include ecological, behavioral, and cognitive assessments and interventions. Thus, the model provides a dynamic context for analysis of the requisite skills of school psychologists at the preschool level, and it is an appropriate response to Hobbs' (1975) call for professional training programs that prepare a variety of specialists "in the management of ecological systems defined by individual exceptional children" (p. 272).

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Analysis of Roles and Specialized Skills

Assessment Roles

School psychologists serving preschool children must play a number of assessment roles, shifting emphasis from child variables based on traditional assessments to environmental variables within the proposed interactive model. This process requires considerable ingenuity to plan effectively, since assessment tools cannot be combined simply but must be guided by appropriate constructs. Multifactored assessment has not fared well with respect to emerging concerns with assessment design (cf. Harris, 1985). Contemporary intervention models (e.g., Craighead, Meyers, & Craighead, 1985) suggest a wide array of potential assessment variables guided by a shift to reciprocal determinism as the basic unit of analysis. Based on this perspective, a child's behavior, personal characteristics, and environmental influences are viewed as interlocking determinants of assessment results. Whereas results from research have not been widely utilized to guide professional behaviors (Barlow, Hayes & Nelson, 1984), for legal, ethical, and ultimately practical reasons, they should be incorporated into assessment plans and intervention design, as advanced in the following discussion.

Previous reviews have identified constructs that can be used to guide assessment roles, interpretations of results, and the development of intervention strategies (Barnett, 1984; 1986). To

operationalize these notions, training experiences should be directed toward the goal of obtaining and organizing information concerning: (a) learning and mediational contexts (e.g., Feuerstein, 1980), within which adults and peers organize experiences for children and help create cognitive and social behaviors (see Dunst, 1985; Gottfried, 1984; Laosa & Sigel, 1982); (b) emerging skills and completed developmental levels (Vygotsky, 1978), including behaviors that are in the formative stages, are rare or intermittent, or are only elicited during naturally occurring environmental changes or during formal behavioral interventions; and (c) learning processes involved in social and preacademic learning such as attentional, retentional, motor reproduction, and motivational processes (Bandura, 1977, 1981). Broadly speaking, preschool assessment roles of school psychologists can be conceived as nontest-based and test-based, and in both cases, assessment plans, interpretations, and outcomes need to be guided by an appropriate conceptual model.

Nontest-based Assessments

Interviews with children and their caregivers and observations of behavior are the cornerstone of nontest-based preschool assessment, since they enable the identification of psychological constructs used to describe problems and effect change. Interviews with young children are variable in their validity, and interpretations may be difficult, but information may be gained that is inaccessible from other sources. Both structured and

unstructured (e.g., play) interviews may be considered. In order to be useful for intervention design, information gained from the interviews of caregivers can be reorganized conceptually into an evaluation of learning and mediational contexts, emerging skills, and learning processes, based on research trends in applied developmental psychology. The reciprocal nature of the relationship between parental belief systems and behaviors and young children's development is of such importance (Dunst, 1985; Sigel, 1985) that interactions between parents and their children represent a crucial target of assessment at the preschool level. In fact, the major benefits of relatively brief, school-based early childhood programs may be attributable to changes in parental attitudes and values, and subsequent mutually reinforcing parent-child interactions that are activated by a child's successful participation in a preschool program (Lazar, 1983).

The function of the interview encompasses both screening and diagnostic analysis. Consistent with the proposed model of preschool psychological services, screening includes: important child and family systems, perceptions of overall adaptation and methods of control, overt and covert behaviors of concern, phenomenological impact of behaviors and situations, and traditionally neglected areas such as play. Targets for indepth interviews are based on screening results and emphasize (a) key situations or major units of analysis that directly impact

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adaptation to environments and coping strategies; (b) component skills or behaviors related to the manner in which learning experiences are provided, and (c) belief systems and goals of the caregivers. Observations also serve a dual screening and diagnostic function through a focus on the key behaviors that signify adaptation. Whereas observations may focus on descriptions of behavior, or on antecedents, the observation of variables that lead directly to changes in behaviors (i.e., how such behaviors are mediated by adults and the component process of successful performances) are related to the design of alternative learning experiences.

Interviews and observations have typically been directed toward problem behaviors. Based on the above analysis, however, they can also be directed toward identifying partial or emerging skills, not only those of the child, but also the behaviors of caregivers used to elicit and mediate children's responses. Mediation refers to reframing, expanding, explaining, and altering situations in a manner facilitative of development (e.g., Feuerstein, 1980). Therefore, efforts can be directed to the identification of naturally occurring approximations to successful strategies. Interviews may reveal that caregivers have a partial grasp of component skills but are not aware of the importance and logical extensions of their behaviors. The value of the behaviors and subsequent skills may need to be taught or reinforced. In this way,

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interventions can be based at least in part on behaviors that are close to being mastered. Issues concerning social validity and caregiver efficacy also can be addressed through this approach. From the above analysis, it is clear that a conceptual rationale for behavioral assessment and interviewing should be at the center of any training program that prepares school psychologists to function at the preschool level.

Test-based Assessments

Similarly, test-based assessments (e.g., Hartmann, Roper, & Bradford, 1979) require careful planning and interpretation since, with young children, the potential is substantial for unintended and negative assessment outcomes related to diagnostic decisions. The major problem is that instrument design is guided by notions related to the stability of constructs and by the purpose of classification, rather than by theories related to behavioral change. Although substantial evidence exists for stability and continuity in early development (Rushton, Brainerd, & Pressley, 1983), change is the major characteristic of childhood: "children are biologically and cognitively designed for adaptation and change" (Achenbach, 1982, p. 655, see also Rutter, 1984). Thus, assessment design for the helping professions should be guided by constructs related to change.

To function most effectively for preschoolers, three major considerations are important. First is the selection of practical instruments; those that lead directly to components of interventions

(e.g., criterion-referenced instruments). Second is the predictive value that global performance measures have, although they must be interpreted within the context of the literature on the modifiability of skills. Third is the notion that global performance measures may assist with the identification of completed developmental levels and promote an understanding of emerging skills through adaptive testing or planned testing of limits procedures. Three areas can be estimated: (a) skills measured independent of assistance, (b) skills the child is close to learning or mastering, and (c) skills that become manifest through aided performance; that is, under conditions in which the highest levels of performance will be maintained at a specific point in time.

Thus, through the use of tests, interviews, and naturalistic observations, school psychologists acquire assessment information related to the acquired and emerging skills of children and significant adults in their environments. With a focus on adult skills and adult-child interactions, the linkage between assessment and intervention is strengthened. In the following discussion of intervention roles, the close linkage with assessment roles is assumed. Specialized skills related to each role are discussed within separate sections of this paper only for purposes of specificity and clarity.

Intervention Roles

Indirect Intervention

The proposed model incorporates role analysis for both indirect and direct service delivery. The term ecological consultation has been used in reference to the activity of consultants who implement Bandura's (1978) reciprocal determinism model (Reynolds, Gutkin, Elliott, & Witt, 1984) through indirect service delivery. Its application implies that the behavior, personal characteristics, and environment within which a child and consultee function reciprocally influence each other within an ecosystem. Consequently, presenting problems are conceptualized as resulting from an inappropriate fit among all of these dimensions rather than as a result of any one dimension acting in isolation. With this in mind, it is assumed that school psychology trainees cannot design adequate intervention and treatment plans for preschool children unless they understand and intervene within the environmental context in which the problems arise. Thus, the assessment data gathered from interviews with teachers and parents and observations of classroom and home environments form the foundation of an ecological model of consultation.

To date, researchers have not evaluated the relative effectiveness of various consultation models at the preschool level. Nevertheless, the problem-solving sequence offered by Gutkin and Curtis (1982) appears to provide a useful series of action steps

for implementing ecological consultation. Using this sequence with parents, teachers, and administrators, trainees would receive practice in defining and clarifying a presenting problem, assessing and diagnosing the problem, brainstorming interventions, evaluating alternatives, specifying consultant and consultee responsibilities, implementing a chosen strategy, and evaluating the effectiveness of the strategy. Following is a discussion of several special considerations for the implementation of these steps when consulting at the preschool level and for the design of research into consultation effectiveness.

Consultation with teachers. Students trained in consultation with preschool teachers need to be aware of numerous issues that make their activities different from consultation regarding older children. First, wide variation exists in the extensiveness of teacher preparation at the preschool level (O'Connell, 1983). Consequently, preschool consultants are likely to interact with teachers representing a variety of personal theories about child development and teaching, and varying levels of skill development in behavioral observation, insight into children's behavior, and developmentally sequenced instruction. This variation in training impacts a teacher's ability to attain the goals of each step in a problem-solving sequence, and to understand the complex interplay of variables within a classroom ecosystem. Some teachers will experience difficulty, while others will be more able to facilitate

the process.

Parallel to variability in teacher training in its impact on a consultant is the wide range of preschool philosophies and models (Clarke-Stewart & Fein, 1983; Weikart, Epstein, Schweinhart, & Bond, 1978). Prominent philosophies are conceptualized by Anastasiow (1978) as the behavioral, normal-developmental, cognitive-developmental, and cognitive-learning models. Additionally, models of service delivery include home-based/child-oriented, home-based/parent-oriented, school- or center-based/child-oriented, and school- or center-based/parent-oriented. Trainees need to be familiar with these various philosophies and models and which ones are adhered to by a particular teacher, remaining sensitive to their effect on the teacher's perspective when engaged in a problem-solving process.

Also contributing to the need for specialized consulting skills at the preschool level is the increased range in the severity level of problems exhibited by young children who have not had as much formalized exposure to an educational setting as older children. Consequently, preschool settings often provide the first context for the social manifestation of serious developmental disabilities. Because of this, longer time frames are necessary to allow for the emergence of a problem behavior or a skill deficit, and, alternatively, for the possibility of successful adaptation. Relatedly, classification

issues impact strongly the direction taken by a consultant at the preschool level. Although well established conventions suggest that assessment/diagnostic functions should be completed in a timely fashion, recommendations for a category of "deferred diagnosis", consistent with suggestions for intervention prior to diagnostic decisions, are being considered by numerous professionals. Thus, with less reliance on global scores from standardized tests and more reliance on behavioral observation, developmental checklists, and criterion-referenced tests given at multiple times, the discussions that consultants have with preschool teachers will reflect a shift in focus from categorization of handicap to developmentally-sequenced assessment and intervention strategies prior to diagnosis.

Moreover, the training of preschool consultation skills is impacted by organizational issues. For example, preschool classrooms may or may not be based in public schools, and the administrative setting and classroom structure are likely to vary along a number of dimensions. Consequently, naturalistic observation of classroom environments, which is important to ecological consultation activities, must be done in a way that accommodates variations in activities, materials, schedule, arrangement of space, and types of teacher-child interactions. Resulting from these variations is a dearth of standardized norms for making judgments and few structured observation instruments to

guide consultation activities. Training in environmental assessment techniques, such as the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (Harms & Clifford, 1980) is beneficial, nevertheless, trainees must possess a flexible set of observation methods to accommodate a variety of organizational and environmental variables and to assess adequately the inter-relatedness among these variables.

Finally, specialized skills are necessary in providing feedback of assessment results to preschool teachers, because research suggests that teachers of young children prefer recommendations with a high degree of specificity, with operational definitions, and with "how-to" examples (White, Nielsen, & Prus, 1984). Bagnato (1982) found teachers to be more efficient in implementing recommendations from comprehensive developmental scales that served as criterion-based measures for curriculum goal planning, than from standardized assessment results. Another innovation for reporting recommendations is to separate examples of strategies, in the form of carefully-written scripts, from a psychological report in order to facilitate communication between a child's teacher(s) and other child care personnel (Barnett & Grow, 1986). Thus, providing specific recommendations and concrete examples as a separate part of a psychological report is recommended practice when consulting with preschool teachers. These strategies are likely to enhance their self-efficacy for

intervening, and thus, to tighten the link between assessment and intervention. These strategies can also be used with parents to facilitate effective intervention and communication among family members in the home setting.

Consultation with parents. Many other considerations are essential when training students to consult with parents of preschool children. First, due to the young age of these children, there is an increased likelihood that a consultant will be interacting with parents who are in the early, perhaps initial, stages of reacting to the knowledge that their child is handicapped or at-risk. In some cases, communication with a school psychologist may constitute the first professional contact the parents have had regarding their child. Thus, students need to be knowledgeable about family life cycles and family systems theory in order to understand the widespread impact of a handicapped child on the family as a whole. Also, students need to be trained to deal with emotions such as anger, denial, and depression and to anticipate their effect on the consultant-consultee relationship. To be fully informed, students must also be aware of how differences in the parents' past experiences, the status of the marital relationship, the severity of the handicap, and other factors can affect the parents' emotional adjustment and the degree to which they are able and willing to become actively involved in their young child's educational program (Dunst, 1985). An innovative interviewing

technique that operationalizes the model proposed in this paper is known as circular questioning (Fleuridas, Nelson, & Rosenthal, 1986), by providing the family with an opportunity to view itself systemically and to develop an awareness of the reciprocal interrelatedness of behaviors and other factors (Penn, 1982).

Further, at the preschool level there is more likelihood than with older children that a referral will come directly from parents, particularly if the child is not attending a formalized preschool program. In situations such as this, consultants need to be aware that these parents may be more anxious than usual to see something done for their child. Also, consultants need to be trained in applying a problem-solving sequence of consultation to home environments. Training in instruments such as the Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment (HOME) (Bradley & Caldwell, 1979) and the Home Screening Questionnaire (HSQ) (Coons, Gay, Fandal, Ker, & Frankenburg, 1981) can be used as guides to help with this process.

Moreover, there are numerous models of parental involvement that guide the direction of preschool consultation (see Welsh & Odum, 1981, for a review). Consultants need to be familiar with these models and possess the flexibility necessary to individualize the nature and extent of parental participation. Models range from being school- or center-based to being home-based; and they range from direct teaching of a child by a parent in the home or classroom

to less direct involvement, where a consultant serves in an advisory capacity. Additionally, interactions can range from one-to-one contact to directing a parent group that serves a supportive or policy-making function. Thus, students must be trained to individualize decision-making relative to realistic relationships with parents. Issues include the roles, objectives, and frequency of contact, as well as specific adaptations to the needs of working parents, parents of varying socio-economic status, minority parents, and parents who are handicapped, single, or very young. Attention to these special characteristics is particularly important, with the increasing number of mothers in the work force and the increasing number of at-risk children born to young mothers, minority parents, and parents living in poverty (Edelman, 1981).

Interagency consultation. Given the need for interagency coordination in the education of young children (Elder & Magrab, 1980; Linder, 1983) and the likelihood that schools will play an expanded coordinating role, school psychologists need to be trained to consult with personnel representing a number of community agencies. These personnel may include representatives from private or public local agencies, state agencies, local medical facilities, state and local social service agencies, Head Start agencies, parent groups, and public service organizations. Special consultation skills are necessary in this interagency context where "turf" issues may arise. Additionally, training in community needs assessment is

necessary to determine duplication and gaps in services, as well as barriers that agencies are encountering that may be hindering their ability to deliver effective and efficient services. Also, administrative knowledge is necessary in identifying funding sources to assist in the provision of needed services. In short, familiarization with administrative issues and practice in organizational consultation are important to effective training in the coordination of services at the preschool level. Linder (1983) provides a practical analysis of these necessary skills and includes sample forms and a case study that assist in the development of training activities.

Direct Intervention

Along with the substantial promise of indirect service concepts is the impressive literature on successful direct interventions with preschool children. Research trends support the importance of naturalistic interventions with preschool children in various settings (Kirschenbaum, 1983). To achieve these goals within the present model, maladaptive behaviors and skill deficits can be recast in training through an analysis of specific behaviors requisite for adaptive functioning and reciprocal interaction between children and adults. Drawing from current research in applied developmental psychology, Beckman, Robinson, Jackson, and Rosenberg (1986) identified four principles that are critical to the design of intervention strategies with preschool-age children.

These include: (a) responsivity to cues from children, (b) the use of language appropriate to the developmental level of individual children, (c) encouragement of active involvement with the environment, and (d) achievement of an "optimal match" between a child's level of functioning and task demands.

Specific training procedures in intervention should include a systematic analysis of these four principles, the range of program and community options available, and validated interventions and replicated case studies found in the literature. Child and setting characteristics, intervention components, observational systems, and outcome variables should be considered. Trainees should be required to develop interventions collaboratively with parents and teachers based on assessment results, curricular options (i.e., the use of a particular curriculum package), research on preschool behavioral techniques (e.g., Barnett & McEvoy, 1984), and principles of social learning theory that are relevant to adjustment (McMahon, Forehand, & Griest, 1981).

For example, prior to designing an intervention for a noncompliant, aggressive preschooler, Barnett and Grow (1986) identified a number of possible interventions that were evaluated for relevance and acceptability (e.g., Budd, Liebowitz, Riner, Mindell, & Goldfarb, 1981; Davies, McMahon, Flessati, Tiedemann, 1984; Roberts, Hatzenbuehler, & Bean, 1981), including time out procedures (e.g., Firestone, 1976; Hobbs & Forehand, 1977), and

restitution and positive practice-overcorrection (e.g., Matson, Horne, Ollendick & Ollendick, 1979; Ollendick & Matson, 1978; Shapiro, 1979). Consistent with the function of assessment plans, the intervention design encompassed a wide range of variables, requiring formal consideration with parents and teachers of questions, such as where the intervention should take place, when, how, and by whom (Glenwick & Jason, 1984).

It is clear that the preparation of school psychologists for assessment, consultation, and intervention roles poses a considerable challenge to training programs, with a wide array of specialized skills requiring adapted training strategies. Easing the training difficulties is the notion that the roles are highly related to one another such that skills in one arena contribute substantially to effectiveness in others. Whether the various roles are actually implemented as interrelated functions depends in large part on how curriculum and practicum experiences are structured in a training program. Thus, what follows is a discussion of ideas for the structuring of graduate curriculum and practicum experiences within this framework.

Graduate Curriculum and Practicum Experiences

There is a growing body of literature regarding the curriculum and practicum components of training programs in early intervention (i.e., Geik, Gilkerson, & Sponseller, 1982; Mallory, 1983; Walker & Hallav, 1981; Zeitlan, du Verglas, & Windhover, 1982). This

literature provides a springboard for the development of early intervention components within school psychology programs. Specifically, a program described by Mallory (1983) is consistent with the model proposed in this paper with its emphasis on the acquisition of skills within an ecological and developmental framework. The program also emphasizes individually-focused intervention strategies and systems-focused change strategies. The overall goal is to prepare graduates to understand the nature of developmental dysfunction as it is caused by or sustained in various ecological settings (Apter, 1977).

To reach these goals, Mallory (1983) recommends that a training program contain a "clinical" component and a "liaison" component. The former provides students with specific diagnostic and prescriptive skills to be applied in both clinical and community/family settings. The latter provides skills in systems or ecological interventions and is based on the "importance of community and its resources by viewing discordance transactionally as a matter of fit between the labeled troubled person and the environment" (Hutton & Dokecki, 1977, p. 5). Within this second component, students would learn to utilize ecologically-oriented intervention strategies to forge linkages among human resources available to young children and their families.

With a primary focus on normal child development from birth to 6 years, coursework within the first component is concentrated on

theories of child development, a wide range of assessment methods, implementation of curricular and instructional options, and evaluation of children's developmental growth in response to planned interventions. Comprising the second component are course offerings in inter-agency coordination, multi-disciplinary team functioning, school-community relations, policy analysis and advocacy, consultation in school and home environments, and organization of parent involvement programs. With training in both of these component areas, as well as core psychology areas, trainees would acquire a general foundation in psychology while also obtaining more specialized clinical and organizational skills.

Although Mallory's (1983) paradigm provides the basic scaffolding for a school psychology curriculum in preschool service delivery, the model does not stress, to the extent we believe is necessary, the interrelatedness of adult and child characteristics, behavior, and setting variables within each ecosystem (i.e., the preschool setting, the family, and community agencies). If our model were implemented by training programs, such an emphasis would be the driving force behind course work and field-based experiences in assessment, consultation, and intervention.

As a vehicle for the acquisition of the many skills mentioned above, the practicum or internship site demands specialized decision-making. Whether based in public schools or in local agencies (e.g., Head Start centers), supervised field work should be

based on an expansion of the usual time frame for the assessment-intervention process. Such an expansion would enable trainees to assess trends in behavior that are characteristic of preschool children, to understand the environmental characteristics of the setting, and to develop an ecologically-valid intervention plan for a young child. Relatedly, contractual agreements need to be made to allow trainees to play a number of different roles rather than assume a narrowly-defined set of assessment responsibilities.

In summary, there is no doubt that a need exists for specialists who possess the necessary clinical and liaison skills for effective preschool service delivery. Also, there is little doubt that school psychologists are interested in developing skills in this area (Mowder & Demartino, 1979). Given the need and the interest, training in preschool service delivery should proceed to address further the analysis of roles and the development of professional judgment relative to young children, their teachers, their families, and the community.

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